

# Notes on some Reptiles from the Malay Peninsula

by G. HOPE SWORDER

## Draco spp.

In spite of intensive collecting, especially in Perak and Negri Sembilan, I have only obtained examples of four species—*melanopogon*, *volans*, *formosus*, and *quinquefasciatus*.

These are common in the Peninsula in the order named. *D. melanopogon* is commonest but only in primary forest, and *D. volans* is the only form common in the towns and open land.

Boulenger has stated of *D. melanopogon* that next to *D. volans* it is the commonest species in the Peninsula, and takes its place in jungle country. It is only recently, however, that this statement has been confirmed, although the collection of the

Raffles Museum contains numerous specimens from undisturbed jungle on neighbouring coastal islands.

I have taken *melanopogon*, *formosus*, and *quinquefasciatus* in rubber adjoining virgin jungle, but have noted that their feet and patagia become clogged with dried latex, considerably hampering movement. *D. volans* seems to be able to avoid this, a fact which may be due to its more upright habit developed as a result of life in the open.

A Malay who saw me collecting *D. volans* volunteered the information that he had once seen an individual scratching in the earth at the foot of a rubber tree—apparently burying something. He investigated and dug up two eggs buried about an inch below the surface. The creature, he said, was so loth to leave the spot that he had to push it on one side.

#### *Aphaniotis fusca*.

This species is very common at Gemas, Negri Sembilan, but I have tried for it time after time in other localities without success, especially in Perak. The only two specimens taken by me in Perak were obtained by chance; one being the specimen referred to in my paper on this species<sup>1</sup> and the other a specimen taken in 1932 at Bukit Berapit, between Taiping and Kuala Kangsar. This was a rather small male. The hind limb exceeded the snout only by 2 mm., and the irides were brown reticulated with gold, not blue as I should have expected. Is it possible that the blue irides and the greater length of hind limb are characters which only develop with full maturity.

#### *Gonycephalus grandis*.

I collected a male at Sok, Kedah in 1930.

#### *Calotes* spp.

*C. versicolor* is the common species near Alor Star, Kedah. The absence of this species from the south of the Peninsula probably signifies that it is a northern species in process of spreading. This pale lizard is most abundant in areas in which the soil is sandy and this factor may influence its distribution.

*C. emma* also appears to be confined to the north of the Peninsula, extending as far south as the mouth of the Perak River and Pulau Rumbia. It was very common at Kampong Menora on the Perak River about five miles south of Kuala Kangsar.

#### *Liolepis belliana*.

Common in the sandy areas east and south of Alor Star, Kedah, where several specimens now in the Raffles Museum were collected by me. I noted that they had been eating the blossoms of a small shrub (*Melastoma* sp.).

<sup>1</sup>. Journ. Mal. Br. Roy. Asiat. Soc., VII, 1929, p. 327.

#### *Mabuya* spp.

*Mabuya macularia* is common in long grass on the race-course at Taiping, Perak. It is very active and hard to catch. Six specimens collected there are in the Raffles Museum. They are all small and I never saw one approaching the measurements indicated in the literature of the species. It does not appear to have been recorded south of Taiping, Perak.

*Mabuya multifasciata*.—I have taken a specimen which disgorged a centipede (*Scolopendra* sp.) longer than its own head and body.

*Mabuya rugifera*.—Four specimens collected in Perak are in the Raffles Museum. Two had the head washed with orange. The ventral surface of the body was, in all four, pinkish, not orange-red.

#### *Lygosoma* spp.

*Lygosoma herberti*.—One male from Kampong Menora, Perak, is in the Raffles Museum. Scale rows 28. Length of head and body 66 mm.; tail 55 mm. (tip regrown). This is the first recorded from the Peninsula proper; it was previously known only from Peninsular Siam.

*Lygosoma vittigerum*.—That this scink is by no means uncommon (Smith, Bull. Raff. Mus., 3, 1930, p. 36) is demonstrated both by the material now in the Raffles Museum and by my own observation. It is often to be seen, but runs up a tree immediately on being disturbed.

*Lygosoma larutense*.—One specimen of the smaller variety (*vide* Smedley, Bull. Raff. Mus., 6, 1931, p. 112) was collected by Major W. A. D. Edwardes at Bukit T'Kabeh, Kedah, 800 feet. It was olive-brown above and yellowish below. Scale rows 24. Text-figs. pp. 104 and 105.

A specimen from Cameron Highlands, Pahang 4,500 feet (coll. Wilkins) is the larger, spotted and striped variety. Scale rows 29.

#### *Agkistrodon rhodostoma*.

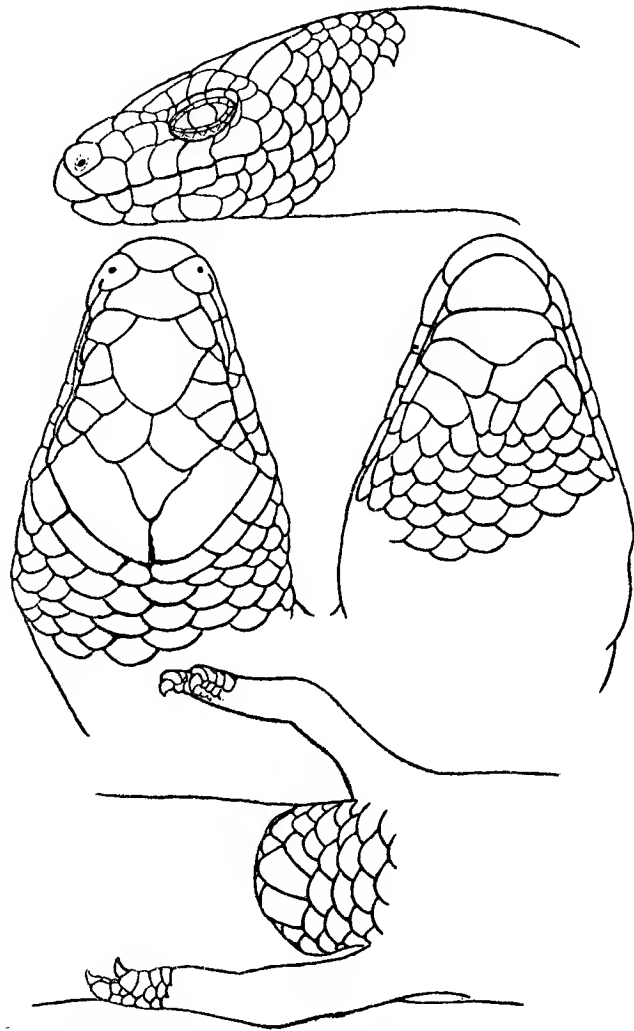
This snake is common near Alor Star, Kedah, as it is in almost the same latitude on the east coast of the Peninsula at Bangnara, Patani (Smith, Bull. R. M., 3, 1930, p. 89), which is only about 20 miles further north than Alor Star.

These two localities define the southern extremity of its known range in the Peninsula. There is a marked change of climate between Alor Star (north Kedah) and north-western Perak, which may account for the non-appearance of this species in the latter locality; but there is no apparent reason why it should not be found in south Kedah and Province Wellesley. I have seen no records of what this snake eats, but it is associated at Alor Star with *Liolepis belliana* which requires

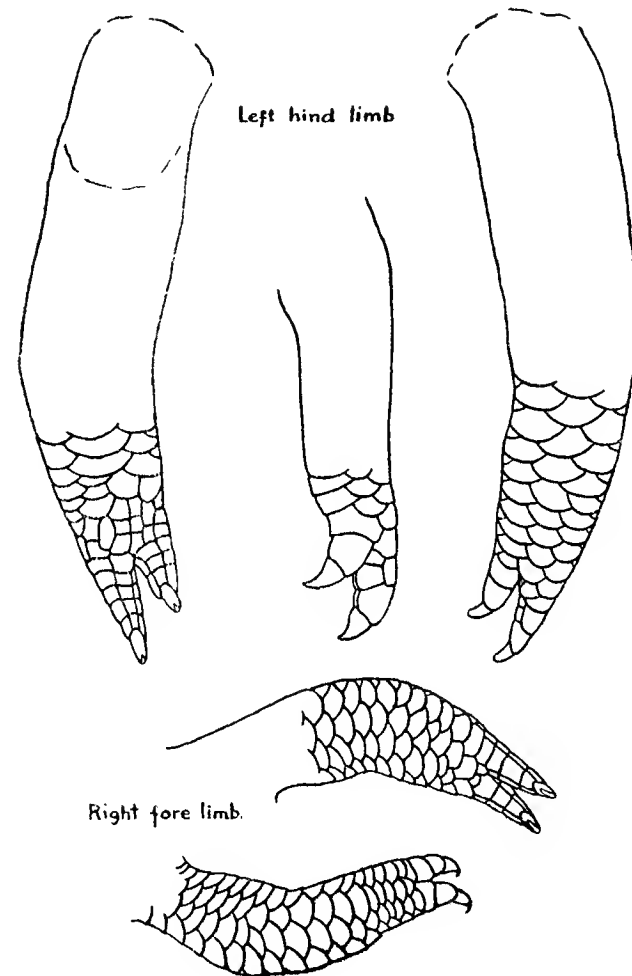
sandy soil for its burrows. It is pure conjecture that there is any connection between the two species, but some such simple ecological relation is probably the cause of the break in the distribution of this snake.

**Bungarus candidus.**

A female (now in Raffles Museum) was taken at Alor Star, Kedah.



*Lygosoma larutense*. Bukit T'Kabeh, Kedah, 800 feet.



*Lygosoma larutense*. Bukit T'Kabeh, Kedah, 800 feet.